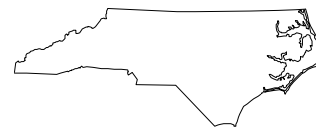

Statistical Brief



State Center for Health Statistics

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Perceptions of Public Health, Quality of Life, and the Threat of Bioterrorism Among North Carolina Adults: Results from the 2001 NC Public Health Awareness Survey

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Introduction

The impetus for this survey comes from North Carolina's Public Health Awareness Program, aimed at measuring and building awareness of the role of public health in our state. Financial support for the survey was provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in a "Turning Point" grant to the North Carolina Division of Public Health. The primary purpose of the survey was to measure the public's understanding and perceived importance of public health services and related issues that affect quality of life.

Interviews were completed mainly in November of 2001, soon after the September 11th terrorist attacks and subsequent anthrax scare. The survey was in a position to measure the perceived threat of bioterrorism among North Carolinians shortly after the first cases of inhalation anthrax deaths were being reported in the state and national media.

The Director of the NC Public Health Awareness Program** and staff from the State Center for Health Statistics* collaborated on the development and implementation of this survey.

The Survey

The survey had four content areas: (1) Public Health (including Boards of Health), (2) Community Health,

(3) Bioterrorism, and (4) Selected Public Health Issues (teen smoking and overweight children). The first module assessed respondent knowledge of public health and personal benefit derived from public health services. The second module assessed perception of healthy communities and the importance of various quality of life issues, such as access to affordable housing. The bioterrorism module contained two questions: one on the perceived likelihood of a bioterrorist attack occurring in North Carolina, and the second on the perceived confidence of one's health being protected, in the event of an attack. Questions on overweight children and teen smoking were included in the last module.

Methods

Survey questions were field tested in early October 2001. The survey was conducted between October 29 and December 8, 2001. The survey was a random-digit-dial telephone survey of non-institutionalized North Carolina adults, ages 18 and older. The sample data was weighted to represent the statewide population of adults by age, race, and sex. The results were tabulated by demographic status and by three additional variables: voting status in the last national election, active community volunteer status, and household-with-children status. The SUDAAN software – for complex survey designs – was used in generating the statistics for this Brief.

The Sample

During the study period, a total of 813 interviews were completed with one adult randomly selected from each



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